

none of your sentimental nonsense about them. But then, why not say 'I demand', instead of 'Art demands'? It would sound less impressive, no doubt. But then these statements would become true, which is surely some advantage. They might even become interesting. But these gentlemen are so modest—in some ways—about speaking for themselves.

Of course, now too, as in the past, it might be urged by one who admitted most of their generalisations to be nonsense, that the practice of modern critics was better than their theories. It might even be better because of them; as scientists may be helped by working hypotheses, though actually incorrect; or as poets may gain a certain depth and unity from philosophies which must often, if not always, be false. But that does not seem to me in fact the case. Critics with creeds can seldom resist the temptation to become dogmatic and fanatic, damning anything outside their own conventicle. Such doctrinaire criticism is, I think, even less justified by its actual works than by its faith. For example—since it is necessary to¹* take one—among the most esteemed of modern critics is Mr. T. S. Eliot, whose two chief critical works, *The Sacred Wood* and *For Lancelot Andrewes*, embody such statements as these:

We can only say that Keats and Shelley would *probably* have become great poets, poets on a much greater scale than Crashaw: judging diem on their accomplishment only, Crashaw

was a finished
master, and Keats and Shelley were apprentices with
immense possibilities before them.

There may be a good deal to be said for
Romanticism in life,
there is no pkce for it in letters.

'Emotion recollected in tranquillity' is an inexact
formula* For
it is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor, without
distortion of
meaning, tranquillity.